

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMCONSUL ASMARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3725

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO IMMEDIATE

CUNCUSNAVEUR LONDON

COMNAVTELCOM WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN

COMIDEASTFOR

NAVCOMMUNIT ASMARA

NAVCOMMSTA NEA MAKRI

CNO WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASMARA 1010

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS ET

SUBJECT: KIDNAPPING OF CISCO EMPLOYEE MICHALKE

REF: ASMARA 1009

1. SUMMARY: MORE EXTENSIVE INTERVIEW WITH ABDUCTEE MICHALKE'S GIRLFRIEND REVEALS THE FOLLOWING: (1) DESPITE EXTENSIVE THEFT OF PROPERTY, OBVIOUS INTENT OF INTRUDERS WAS ABDUCTION OF MICHALKE; (2) ABDUCTORS OBVIOUSLY WELL-INFORMED ON OCCUPANTS OF HOUSE AND LOCATION OF OTHER AMERICANS IN NEIGHBORHOOD; AND (3) ABDUCTORS, WHILE NOT PHYSICALLY OR VERBALLY ABUSIVE OF THE AMERICAN, WERE INTENT ON TAKING FURTHER AMERICAN HOSTAGE FOR, AS YET, UNKNOWN PURPOSES. END SUMMARY.

2. APO AND OIC NAVCOMMUNIT CONDUCTED 40-MINUTE DEBRIEFING OF MICHALKE'S GIRLFRIEND, MEDINA GEBRU, CONCERNING ABDUCTION.

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GEBRU WAS STILL CONFUSED AND SHAKEN FROM INCIDENT AND WAS IN

ADDITION, FEARFUL OF ABDUCTORS' ABOUT PROVIDING DETAILS OF ABDUCTION. NONETHELESS, SHE DID ADD FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL POINTS. FROM OUTSET, ABDUCTORS TOLD MICHALKE THAT THEIR INTENT WAS TO TAKE HIM WITH THEM AND ENTIRE INCIDENT REVOLVED AROUND THAT INTENTION. AFTER THREATS TO OPEN FIRE INTO HOUSE, ABDUCTORS WERE LED IN BACKDOOR, WHEN SMASHING FRONTDOOR DID NOT PROVE EFFECTIVE. THEY IMMEDIATELY TOLD MICHALKE TO GET PROPERLY DRESSED AND TO PACK HIS CLOTHES. HE PACKED TWO SUITCASES AND WAS THEN HUSTLED OUT OF THE HOUSE AND INTO STREET. HIS GUARD WAS TOLD HE WAS NEEDED TO CARRY SUITCASES AND AFTERWARD HE WOULD BE RELEASED. ONCE MICHALKE AND THE GUARD LEFT, ONE REMAINING ABDUCTOR PROCEEDED TO TAKE TWO CASSETTE TAPE RECORDERS, ONE RADIO, AB BRIEFCASE CONTAINING BOTH ETHIOPIAN AND U.S. CURRENCY, 8 OR 9 BOTTLES OF LIQUOR, AND SOME FOOD. ALL THESE WERE WRAPPED IN SHEETS AND DRAPES AND CARRIED OFF.

3. AT ONE POINT DURING THE ABDUCTION THEY ASKED GEBRU WHERE THE SECOND AMERICAN WAS. SHE SAID SHE AND MICHALKE WERE THE ONLY OCCUPANTS OF THAT HOUSE. THEY THEN ASKED WHO LIVED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BACK WALL. WHEN SHE CLAIMED SHE DID NOT KNOW, THEY SAID, "WE KNOW ANOTHER AMERICAN LIVES THERE." THEY BRIEFLY SURVEYED THE WALL AND DECIDED RATHER THAN CLIMBING IT THEY WOULD GO AROUND BLOCK AND "PICK HIM UP, TOO." APPARENTLY NO ATTEMPT WAS MADE TO ENTER THAT HOME, ALTHOUGH AMERICAN OCCUPANT WAS SPENDING NIGHT AT TRACT ECHO.

4. ALTHOUGH GEBRU WAS CONVINCED ABDUCTORS WERE "ELF", AT NO TIME IN THE DISCUSSION DID THEY IDENTIFY THEMSELVES OR THEIR AFFILIATION. LIKewise, THEY MADE NO HOSTILE COMMENTS ABOUT AM ARAS OR EPMG SECURITY FORCES. HOWEVER, IN SEARCH FOR MONEY, WHICH THEY WERE INITIALLY UNSUCCESSFUL IN FINDING, THEY MADE REFERENCE TO THE FACT THAT AMERICANS ARE CLEVER BECAUSE THEY ARE "FASCISTS."

5. MICHALKE'S HOME IS LOCATED TWO BLOCKS FROM OUTER PERIMETER OF THIS NEIGHBORHOOD, AT WHICH POINT THERE IS A LARGE FIELD WHICH LEADS OFF INTO COUNTRYSIDE. THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 10 HOUSES OCCUPIED BY AMERICAN DOD-CONTRACT EMPLOYEES IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD. HOWEVER, MICHALKE'S IS ON FURTHEST FRINGE.

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6. REPS OF DOD-CONTRACTORS, OIC NAVCOMMUNIT, AND APO WILL MEET THIS AFTERNOON TO DETERMINE WHAT MEASURES SHOULD BE TAKEN TO IMPROVE SECURITY FOR THOSE AMERICANS LIVING OFF TRACT ECHO. AT THIS POINT ALTERNATIVES SEEM LIMITED TO FOLLOWING: (1) MOVING ALL EMPLOYEES ONTO TRACT ECHO WHICH, THOUGH FEASIBLE, WOULD CREATE MORALE PROBLEMS; (2) REQUESTING EPMG UNIFORMED GUARDS BE POSTED IN COMPOUNDS OF AMERICANS; AND (3) IMPROVING PHYSICAL SECURITY OF HOMES OUTSIDE TRACT ECHO. OIC IN MEETING WITH COL.

TELAHUN, CO, EPMG FORCES ERITREA, EXPLORED POSSIBILITY OF POSTING  
UNIFORMED AND ARMED GUARDS AT EACH COMPOUND. TELA HUN WAS NOT  
ENTHUSIASTIC, SAYING IF AMERICANS WERE CONCENTRATED IN ONE AREA,  
SECURITY WOULD BE MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE. FINAL DECISION ON IMMEDIATE  
SECURITY PROBLEM WILL BE SUBJECT OF SEPTTEL.  
WAUCHOPE

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## Message Attributes

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**To:** STATE ADDIS ABABA  
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